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Title:

Comments: I'm an avid hike and have been going to Mission Trails San Diego Regional Park back since at least my teenage years. I believe that the California education system, field trips, and my personal trips to these parks have instilled in me a sense a respect for the expansive wilderness and the outdoors. Things like, leave no trace, stay and the developed trails, and leave the park better than when you first got there are examples of instilled practices I've adopted as an outdoorsie hiker. I also got into climbing almost a decade ago. When I first started climbing outdoors, I didn't understand how we, outdoursie people could protect the outdoors, leave no trace and have permenant metal bolts and holes in rock formations. This contradiction was a thing that tried to make sense of for a long time. At the extremes, the two can never fully exist without a sense of dissonance. I believe that this issue should be assessed with cost benefit and compromise in mind. Without bolts, there would be a higher barrier to access these high remote areas. And without bolts, there will be many of those that come after me that won't get the chance to experience the breath taking valley that sits below El Cajon MTN. I have fond memories of my first times hiking Mission Trails with my cousins and uncle and I have fond memories of my friends teaching me how to top rope for the first time out in these ecological reserves. I remember reconsidering my lack of fear for heights for the first time in my life, the the heat of the rock the summer rock permeate through my shoes as I feel the burn of my foot muscles pushing up past previous limits. Now, with the removal of bolts, we are removing people of the chance to experience half of the awe that I have been blessed to experience. I believe that the route forward is education in route establishment and regulation of new routes be set by local park staff, but the staff should be educated on risks and standards in setting guidelines. I believe that that's the safest approach without neglecting the needs and desires of the public (to experience climbing outside). I'd also like to address the large boom in outdoor climbing and climbing in general that a post pandemic and social media era has brought us. With the high rise in newbie climbers, I am concerned for the safety of myself, the public and maintaining a culture of respect for the outdoors. Rock climbing outdoors with individuals who don't respect the outdoors and don't show respect to the inherent dangers of mother nature is a pet peve of mine and a personal safety risk. I have personally talked to rangers who noticed the uptick in ankle breaks in boulder sites since the pandemic era. I've had newbies move pads from under me that exposed rock thinking it was better set that way. I've noticed that climbers aren't getting the introduction to rope climbing that I did; an apprenticeship that reinforced safety, residency and respect to the outdoors as well as the fallible human mind. But I believe that a safety solution that resultsi n banning isn't the way to go with bolts; just as Prohibition did not keep people from drinking, but resulted in even unsafer drinking habits. I believe that the best solution that maintains the best interest of all parties of the public in mind is through establishment of culture and investing in education. The large novel social trend and interest in climbing is a prime time to (re)establish climbing culture and is a huge loss to the public if we don't fully utilize this trending enthusiasm for climbing and instead banning it; with huge inherent risks of undereducated individuals climbing and establish routes during the Prohibition. The way to prevent this risk, again is to educate those who establish routes with acceptable safety standards and guidelines and promoting and passing down a culture of humility and respect to the outdoors. This one of the strongest ways in how we keep the public safe and promote the development of culture and conservation with climbing's rising popularity. -Chris Q.